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Looking Backward

Ellis Mount

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the library is now facing. Others loom: preserving what is primarily a print collection, enlarging its role as an educational and cultural institution, maintaining its physical plant and grounds, and, of course, handling myriad financial and budgetary matters.

Although the library's financial position is still stable, and its ability to build and offer its collections is still high, Linda Hall Library must now take all steps necessary to deal with the problems of the 1990s to ensure that this remains true. The framework is in place, and the administration and staff are confident, even excited, at the prospect that a new era has begun for Linda Hall Library.

LINDA HALL LIBRARY

Address: 5109 Cherry Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64110

Phone: 816/363-4600 (ext. 52) for ILL; exts. 37, 29 for Reference); 816/363-5020 for administration

Hours:

Monday:9:00 a.m.-8:30 p.m.; Tuesday-Friday:9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Saturday:10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Closed Sunday.

Paul Peterson is the Assistant to the Director at Linda Hall Library. A native of Chicago, he received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Russian Language and Literature and a Master of Arts in Library Science from the University of Missouri - Columbia. He has been a member of SLA's Science and Technology Division since 1985, and was Chair of the Publishing Division in 1988-89. He has been with Linda Hall Library since 1977.

LOOKING BACKWARD

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It is conventional to assume that all conditions in our libraries have changed drastically during the past 25 years, but a perusal of the Summer 1965 issue of Sci-Tech News will show that attitudes and practices have changed little in regard to two aspects of sci-tech libraries, namely the use of microfilm and translations.

The issue carried results of two surveys dealing with these materials. The microfilm study showed that most sci-tech library users disliked using microfilm, but practically all librarians felt compelled by space limitations to rely on microfilm, regardless of user attitudes. Even library users, however, had to admit that microfilm was better than nothing. No doubt modern microfilm readers are a great improvement over those in use at the time of the survey, but I have yet to find a person who prefers reading microfilm to the original size document.

The translation survey found that, not unlike today, a few libraries had their own staff translators, a few shared translators with other departments, and the rest had to borrow or pay for translations. All recognized the value of translations, but methods of obtaining them varied greatly from one organization to another.

So it seems little has changed in these areas, no matter how much our other operations and equipment have been transformed since then.